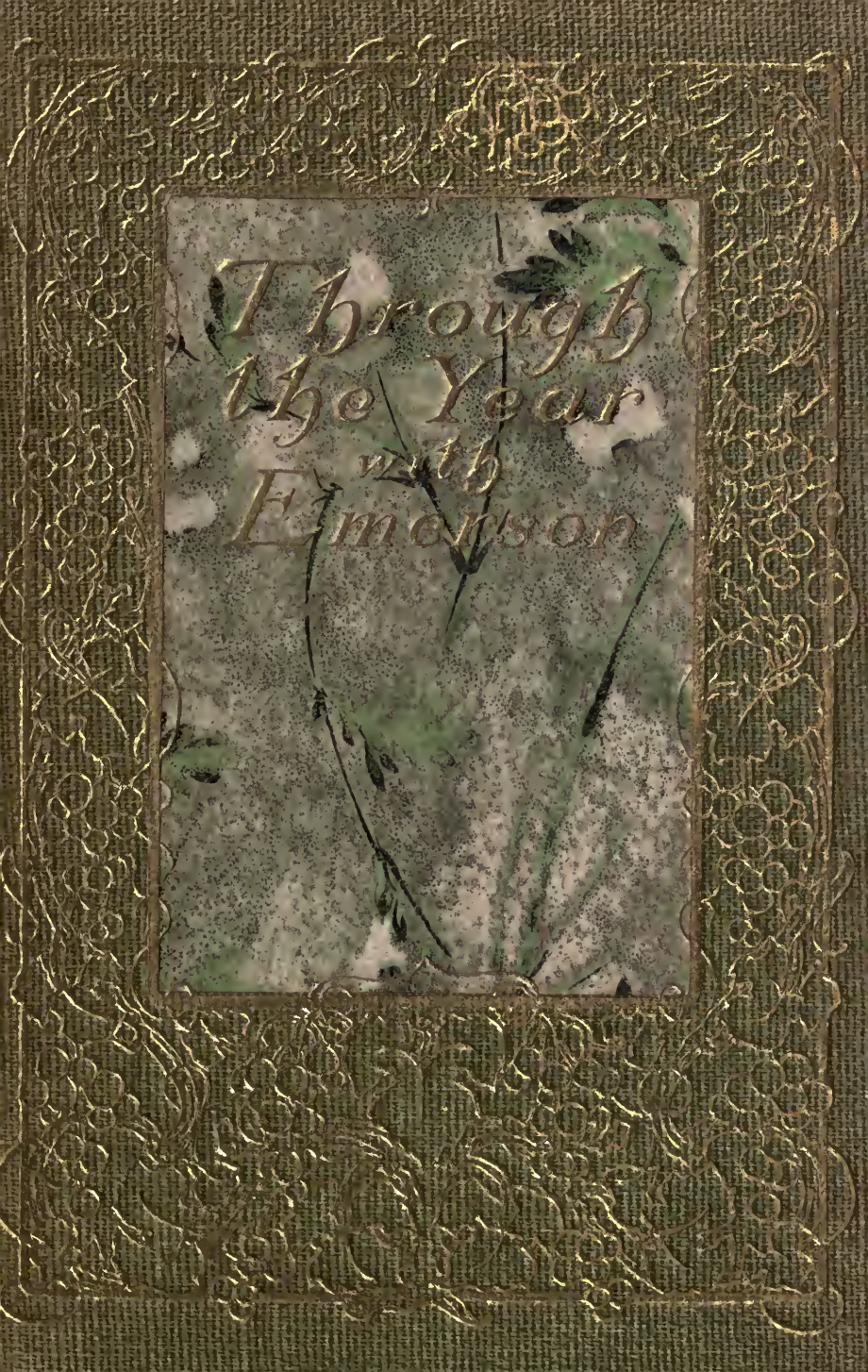
Through
the Year
with
Emerson

THROUGH THE YEAR WITH EMERSON

SELECTED AND
ARRANGED BY
EDITH E. WOOD

DODGE PUBLISHING COMPANY
40 EAST 19TH STREET, NEW YORK

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THROUGH THE YEAR WITH EMERSON

FRIENDSHIP

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "FRIENDSHIP"

January First.

E have a great deal more kindness than is ever spoken. * * * the whole human family is bathed with an element of love like a fine ether.

January Second.

The effect of the indulgence of this human affection is a certain cordial exhilaration.

January Third.

Friendship, like the immortality of the soul, is too good to be believed.

January Fourth.

Two may talk and one may hear, but three cannot take part in a conversation of the most sincere and searching sort.

January Fifth.

Almost every man we meet requires some civility, requires to be humored; * * * but a friend is a sane man who exercises not my ingenuity, but me.

January Sixth.

ET the soul be assured that somewhere in the universe it should rejoin its friend, and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years.

January Seventh.

I awoke this morning with devout thanksgiving for my friends, the old and the new.

January Eighth.

Let us approach our friend with an audacious trust in the truth of his heart, in the breadth, impossible to be overturned, of his foundations.

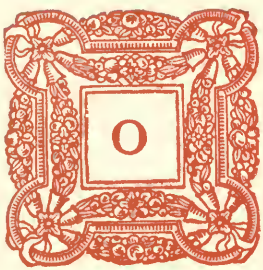
January Ninth.

My friends have come to me unsought. The great God gave them to me.

January Tenth.

When friendships are real, they are not glass threads of frost-work, but the solidest thing we know.

January Eleventh.



UR friendships hurry to short and poor conclusions, because we have made them a texture of wine and dreams instead of the tough fiber of the human heart.

January Twelfth.

A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud.

January Thirteenth.

Love, which is the essence of God, is not for levity, but for the total worth of man.

January Fourteenth.

For perfect friendship may be said to require natures so rare and costly, so well tempered each, and so happily adapted * * * that very seldom can its satisfaction be realized.

January Fifteenth.

There are two elements that go to the composition of friendship: one is Truth, the other is Tenderness.

FRIENDSHIP.

January Sixteenth.

RIENDSHIP—that select and sacred relation which is a kind of absolute, and which even leaves the language of love suspicious and common, so much is this purer, and nothing is so much divine.

January Seventeenth.

Respect so far the holy laws of this fellowship as not to prejudice its perfect flower by your impatience for its opening. We must be our own before we can be another's.

January Eighteenth.

Every man alone is sincere. At the entrance of a second person, hypocrisy begins.

January Nineteenth.

Our intellectual and active powers increase with our affection.

January Twentieth.

A friend may well be reckoned the master-piece of nature.

January Twenty-first.

APPY is the house that shelters a friend! It might well be built, like a festal bower or arch, to entertain him a single day. Happier, if he know the solemnity of that relation and honor its law!

January Twenty-second.

I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances.

January Twenty-third.

Better be a nettle in the side of your friend than his echo.

January Twenty-fourth.

The only money of God is God. He pays never with anything less, or anything else. The only reward of virtue is virtue: the only way to have a friend is to be one.

January Twenty-fifth.

When a man becomes dear to me I have touched the goal of fortune.

January Twenty-sixth.

NO two men but being left alone with each other enter into simpler relations. Yet it is affinity that determines which two shall converse.

January Twenty-seventh.

Let me alone to the end of the world, rather than that my friend should overstep, by a word or a look, his real sympathy.

January Twenty-eighth.

Pleasant are these jets of affection which make a young world for me again.

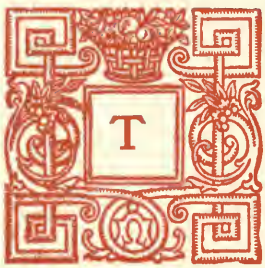
January Twenty-ninth.

Almost all people descend to meet. All association must be a compromise.

January Thirtieth.

I do then with my friends as I do with my books. I would have them where I can find them, but I seldom use them.

January Thirty-first.



HE essence of friendship is entireness, a total magnanimity and trust. It must not surmise or provide for infirmity. It treats its object as a god, that it may deify both.

COMPENSATION

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "COMPENSATION"

February First.

HERE is always some leveling circumstance that puts down the overbearing, the strong, the rich, the fortunate substantially on the same ground with all others.

February Second.

The voice of the Almighty saith, "Up and onward forevermore!" We cannot stay amid the ruins.

February Third.

For everything you have missed, you have gained something else; and for everything you gain you lose something.

February Fourth.

Every excess causes a defect; every defect an excess. Every sweet hath its sour, every evil its good.

February Fifth.

Treat men as pawns and nine-pins and you shall suffer as well as they. If you leave out their heart you shall lose your own.

COMPENSATION.

February Sixth.

LEARN the wisdom of St. Bernard, "Nothing can work me damage except myself; the harm that I sustain I carry about with me, and never am a real sufferer but by my own fault."

February Seventh.

The true doctrine of omnipresence is that God reappears with all his parts in every moss and cobweb.

February Eighth.

He who by force of will or of thought is great and overlooks thousands, has the responsibility of overlooking.

February Ninth.

The farmer imagines power and place are fine things. But the President has paid dear for his White House.

February Tenth.

Punishment is a fruit that unsuspected ripens within the flower of the pleasure which concealed it.

February Eleventh.

VERY opinion reacts on him who utters it. It is a thread ball thrown at a mark, but the other end remains in the thrower's bag.

February Twelfth.

As the royal armies sent against Napoleon * * * from enemies became friends, so do disasters of all kinds * * * prove benefactors.

February Thirteenth.

No man thoroughly understands a truth until first he has contended against it.

February Fourteenth.

In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor * * * we gain the strength of the temptation we resist.

February Fifteenth.

Though no checks to a new evil appear, the checks exist, and will appear.

February Sixteenth.

VERY faculty which is a receiver of pleasure has an equal penalty put on its abuse. It is to answer for its moderation with its life.

February Seventeenth.

Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end preëxists in the means, the fruit in the seed.

February Eighteenth.

Every man in his lifetime needs to thank his faults.

February Nineteenth.

Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied.

February Twentieth.

Always pay; for first or last you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement.

February Twenty-first.

HILST I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man I have no displeasure in meeting him. * * * But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity * * * there is hate in him and fear in me.

February Twenty-second.

The wise man always throws himself on the side of his assailants. It is more his interest than it is theirs to find his weak point.

February Twenty-third.

As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him.

February Twenty-fourth.

Beware of too much good staying in your own hands. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

February Twenty-fifth.

A man cannot speak but he judges himself.

COMPENSATION.

February Twenty-sixth.

UR strength grows out of our weakness. Not until we are pricked and stung and sorely shot at, awakens the indignation which arms itself with secret forces.

February Twenty-seventh.

Commit a crime, and the earth is made of glass. There is no such thing as concealment.

February Twenty-eighth.

If the gatherer gathers too much, nature takes out of the man what she puts into his chest; swells the estate, but kills the owner.

February Twenty-ninth.

All the good of nature is the soul's, and may be had if paid for in nature's lawful coin, that is by labor which the heart and the head allow.

SELF-RELIANCE

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "SELF-RELIANCE"

March First.

HERE is a time in every man's education when he arrives at the conviction that * * * no kernel of nourishing corn can come to him but through his toil bestowed on that plot of ground which is given to him to till.

March Second.

To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men,—that is genius.

March Third.

When a man lives with God, his voice shall be as sweet as the murmur of the brook and the rustle of the corn.

March Fourth.

Do your work, and you shall reinforce yourself.

March Fifth.

A man is relieved and gay when he has put his heart into his work and done his best; but what he has said or done otherwise shall give him no peace.

March Sixth.

LSE, if you would be a man, speak what you think to-day in words as hard as cannon balls, and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks * * * though it contradicts everything you said to-day.

March Seventh.

What I must do is all that concerns me, not what the people think.

March Eighth.

Trust thyself: every heart vibrates to that iron string.

March Ninth.

He who would gather immortal palms must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness.

March Tenth.

Fear never but you shall be consistent in whatever variety of actions, so that they be each honest and natural in their hour.

March Eleventh.

N every work of genius we recognize our own rejected thoughts; they come back to us with a certain alienated majesty.

March Twelfth.

Be it how it will, do right now. Always scorn appearances and you always may.

March Thirteenth.

Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet.

March Fourteenth.

In the Will work and acquire, and thou hast chained the wheels of Chance, and shall always drag her after thee.

March Fifteenth.

It is only as a man puts off from himself all external support and stands alone that I see him to be strong and to prevail.

March Sixteenth.

RAYER that craves a particular commodity — anything less than all good, is vicious.

March Seventeenth.

Welcome evermore to gods and men is the self-helping man. For him all doors are flung wide.

March Eighteenth.

If we follow the truth it will bring us out safe at last.

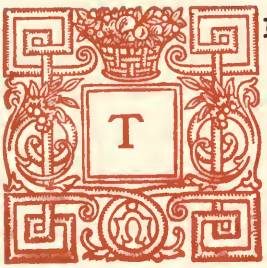
March Nineteenth.

All persons have their moments of reason, when they look out into the region of absolute truth.

March Twentieth.

If you can love me for what I am, we shall be the happier. If you cannot, I will still seek to deserve that you should. I must be myself.

March Twenty-first.



HERE is a great responsible Thinker and Actor moving wherever moves a man; that a true man belongs to no other time or place, but is the center of things.

March Twenty-second.

Life only avails, not the having lived.

March Twenty-third.

Insist on yourself; never imitate.

March Twenty-fourth.

Prayer is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view.

March Twenty-fifth.

If we live truly, we shall see truly.

March Twenty-sixth.

Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles.

March Twenty-seventh.

RAVELING is a fool's paradise.

* * * my giant goes with me wherever I go.

March Twenty-eighth.

To be great is to be misunderstood.

March Twenty-ninth.

Discontent is the want of self-reliance; it is infirmity of will.

March Thirtieth.

We pass for what we are.
Character teaches above our wills.

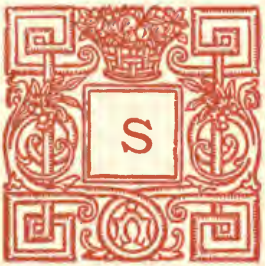
March Thirty-first.

As soon as the man is at one with God, he will not beg. He will then see prayer in all action.

EXPERIENCE

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "EXPERIENCE"

April First.



O much of our time is preparation, so much is routine, and so much retrospect, that the pith of each man's genius contracts itself to a very few hours.

April Second.

Life is a train of moods like a string of beads, and, as we pass through them, they prove to be many colored lenses which paint the world their own hue, and each shows only what lies in its focus.

April Third.

We live amid surfaces, and the true art of life is to skate well on them.

April Fourth.

If we will take the good we find, asking no questions, we shall have heaping measures.

April Fifth.

To fill the hour,—that is happiness; to fill the hour and leave no crevice for a repentance or an approval.

April Sixth.

O not craze yourself with thinking, but go about your business anywhere. Life is not intellectual or critical, but sturdy. Its chief good is for well mixed people, who can enjoy what they find without question.

April Seventh.

Nature and books belong to the eyes that see them. It depends upon the mood of the man, whether he shall see the sunset or the fine poem.

April Eighth.

To finish the moment, to find the journey's end in every step of the road, to live the greatest number of good hours, is wisdom.

April Ninth.

The results of life are uncalculated and uncalculable. The years teach much which the days never know.

April Tenth.

Every man is an impossibility until he is born; everything impossible, until we see a success.

April Eleventh.

LL good conversation, manners, and action, come from a spontaneity which forgets usages, and makes the moment great. Nature hates calculators; her methods are saltatory and impulsive.

April Twelfth.

Since our office is with moments let us husband them. Five minutes of to-day are worth as much to me as five minutes in the next millennium.

April Thirteenth.

We thrive by casualties. Our chief experiences have been casual.

April Fourteenth.

We believe in ourselves, as we do not believe in others. We permit all things to ourselves, and that which we call sin in others, is experiment for us.

April Fifteenth.

There never was a right endeavor, but it succeeded. Patience and patience, we shall win at the last.

April Sixteenth.

LL writings come by the grace of God, and all doing and having. * * * I can see nothing at last, in success or failure, than more or less of vital force supplied from the Eternal.

April Seventeenth.

A man is like a bit of Labrador spar, which has no luster as you turn it in your hand, until you come to a particular angle; then it shows deep and beautiful colors.

April Eighteenth.

Every man thinks a latitude safe for himself, which is no wise to be indulged to another.

April Nineteenth.

The great and crescive self, rooted in absolute nature, supplants all relative existence, and ruins the kingdom of mortal friendship and love.

April Twentieth.

Life will be imaged, but cannot be divided nor doubled. Any invasion of its unity would be chaos.

April Twenty-first.

THE most attractive class of people are those who are powerful obliquely, and not by the direct stroke: men of genius but not yet accredited: one gets the cheer of their light, without paying too great a tax.

April Twenty-second.

Men live in their fancy, like drunkards whose hands are too soft and tremulous for successful labor. It is a tempest of fancies, and the only ballast I know, is a respect to the present hour.

April Twenty-third.

A man is a golden impossibility. The line he must walk is a hair's breadth. The wise through excess of wisdom is made a fool.

April Twenty-fourth.

In popular experience everything good is on the highway. * * * to say nothing of nature's pictures in every street, of sunsets and sunrises every day, and the sculpture of the human body never absent.

April Twenty-fifth.

I AM grown by sympathy a little eager and sentimental, but leave me alone and I should relish every hour and what it brought me. * * * I am thankful for small mercies.

April Twenty-sixth.

Man lives by pulses; our organic movements are such, * * * and the mind goes antagonizing on, and never prospers but by fits.

April Twenty-seventh.

Life is a series of surprises, and would not be worth taking or keeping, if it were not. God delights to isolate us every day, and hide from us the past and the future.

April Twenty-eighth.

Human life is made up of two elements, power and form, and the proportion must be invariably kept, if we would have it sweet and sound. Each of these elements in excess makes a mischief as hurtful as its defect.

April Twenty-ninth.

NEVER mind the ridicule, never mind the defeat: up again, old heart!—it seems to say,—there is victory yet for all justice.

April Thirtieth.

The ardors of piety agree at last with the coldest skepticism,—that nothing is of us or our works,—that all is of God.

PRUDENCE

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "PRUDENCE"

May First.

E write from aspiration and antagonism, as well as from experience. We paint those qualities which we do not possess.

May Second.

Prudence is the virtue of the senses. It is the science of appearances. It is the outmost action of the inward life.

May Third.

Prudence is false when detached. It is legitimate when it is the Natural History of the soul incarnate, when it unfolds the beauty of laws within the narrow scope of the senses.

May Fourth.

Nature punishes any neglect of prudence.

May Fifth.

We are instructed by these petty experiences which usurp the hours and years.

May Sixth.

RUDENCE does not go behind nature and ask whence it is? It takes the laws of the world whereby man's being is conditioned, as they are, and keeps these laws that it may enjoy their proper good.

May Seventh.

Time is always bringing the occasions that disclose their value. Some wisdom comes out of every natural and innocent action.

May Eighth.

Let a man keep the law,—any law,—and his way will be strown with satisfactions.

May Ninth.

If the hive be disturbed by rash and stupid hands, instead of honey it will yield us bees.

May Tenth.

The application of means to ends ensures victory, and the songs of victory not less in a farm or a shop than in the tactics of party or of war.

May Eleventh.

OUR American character is marked with a more than average delight in accurate perception, which is shown by the currency of the by-word, "No Mistake."

May Twelfth.

The domestic man, who loves no music so well as his kitchen clock and the airs which the logs sing to him as they burn on the hearth, has solaces which others never dream of.

May Thirteenth.

He that despiseth small things will perish by little and little.

May Fourteenth.

As much wisdom may be expended on a private economy as on an empire, and as much wisdom may be drawn from it.

May Fifteenth.

In skating over thin ice our safety is in our speed.

May Sixteenth.

BY diligence and self-command let him put the bread he eats at his own disposal, and not at that of others, that he may not stand in bitter and false relations to other men; for the best good of wealth is freedom.

May Seventeenth.

Poetry and prudence should be coincident. Poets should be law-givers; that is, the boldest lyric inspiration should not chide and insult, but should announce and lead the civil code and the day's work.

May Eighteenth.

Let him learn that everything in nature, even motes and feathers, go by law and not by luck, and that which he sows he reaps.

May Nineteenth.

The eye of prudence may never shut.

May Twentieth.

On him who scorned the world, as he said, the scorned world wreaks its revenge.

May Twenty-first.

RANKNESS proves to be the best tactics, for it invites frankness, puts the parties on a convenient footing, and makes their business a friendship.

May Twenty-second.

Keep the rake, says the haymaker, as nigh the scythe as you can, and the cart as nigh the rake.

May Twenty-third.

A man of genius, of an ardent temperament, reckless of physical laws, self-indulgent, becomes presently unfortunate, querulous, a "discomfortable cousin," a thorn to himself and others.

May Twenty-fourth.

Every violation of truth is not only a sort of suicide in the liar, but is a stab at the health of human society.

May Twenty-fifth.

Trust men and they will be true to you, treat them greatly and they will show themselves great.

May Twenty-sixth.

HE good husband finds method as efficient in the packing of fire-wood in a shed or in the harvesting of fruits in the cellar, as in the files of the Department of State.

May Twenty-seventh.

The prudence which secures an outward well-being is not to be studied by one set of men, whilst heroism and holiness are studied by another, but they are reconcilable.

May Twenty-eighth.

He who wishes to walk in the most peaceful parts of life with any serenity must screw himself up to resolution.

May Twenty-ninth.

Our words and actions to be fair must be timely. A gay and pleasant sound is the whetting of the scythe in the mornings of June; yet what is more lonesome and sad than the sound of a whetstone or mower's rifle when it is too late in the season to make hay?

May Thirtieth.

ET him practice the minor virtues. How much of human life is lost in waiting! Let him not make his fellow creatures wait. How many words and promises are promises of conversation! Let his be words of fate.

May Thirty-first.

It (prudence) is God taking thought for oxen. It moves matter after the laws of matter. It is content to seek health of body by complying with physical conditions, and health of mind by the laws of the intellect.

L O V E

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "LOVE"

June First.

ATURE * * * in the first sentiment of kindness anticipates already a benevolence which shall lose all particular regards in its general light. The introduction of this felicity is in a private and tender relation of one to one, which is the enchantment of human life.

June Second.

This passion of which we speak, though it begin with the young, yet forsakes not the old, or rather suffers no one who is truly its servant to grow old.

June Third.

Love is omnipresent in nature as motive and reward. Love is our highest word and the synonym of God.

June Fourth.

Every soul is a celestial Venus to every other soul.

June Fifth.

Like a certain divine rage (this enchantment) seizes on man at one period and works a revolution in his mind and body.

June Sixth.

T matters not, whether we attempt to describe the passion at twenty, at thirty, or at eighty years. He who paints it at the first period will lose some of its later, he who paints it at the last, some of its earlier traits.

June Seventh.

Every promise of the soul has innumerable fulfillments. Each of its joys ripens into a new want.

June Eighth.

Alas! I know not why, but infinite compunctions embitter in mature life all the remembrances of budding sentiment, and cover every beloved name.

June Ninth.

Everything is beautiful seen from the point of the intellect, or as truth. But all is sour if seen as experien

June Tenth.

Details are always melancholy; the plan is seemly and noble.

June Eleventh.

ITH thought, with the ideal, is immortal hilarity, the rose of joy. Round it all the muses sing. But with names and persons and the partial interests of to-day and yesterday is grief.

June Twelfth.

Every heart has its sabbaths and jubilees in which the world appears as a hymeneal feast.

June Thirteenth.

All mankind love a lover. The earliest demonstrations of complacency and kindness are nature's most winning pictures.

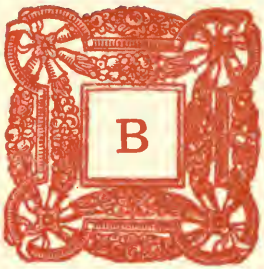
June Fourteenth.

It is strange how painful is the actual world—the painful kingdom of time and place. There dwells care and canker and fear.

June Fifteenth.

He touched the secret of the matter who said of love, "All other pleasures are not worth its pains."

June Sixteenth.



E our experience in particulars what it may, no man ever forgot the visitations of that power to his heart and brain, which created all things new.

June Seventeenth.

Beauty is ever that divine thing the ancients esteemed it. It is, they said, the flowering of virtue.

June Eighteenth.

Into the most pitiful and abject it will infuse a heart and courage to defy the world, so only it have the countenance of the beloved object.

June Nineteenth.

The passion re-makes the world for the youth. * * * Nature grows conscious. Every bird on the boughs of the tree sings now to his heart and soul.

June Twentieth.

We are by nature observers, and thereby learners.

June Twenty-first.

THE statue is then beautiful when it begins to be incomprehensible, when it is passing out of criticism * * * but demands an active imagination to go with it, and to say what it is in the act of doing.

June Twenty-second.

The strong bent of nature is seen in the proportion which this topic of personal relations usurps in the conversation of society. What do we wish to know of any worthy person so much as how he sped in the history of this sentiment.

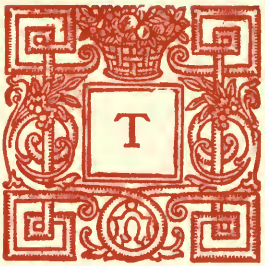
June Twenty-third.

The Deity sends the glory of youth before the soul, that it may avail itself of beautiful bodies as aids to its recollection of the celestial good and fair.

June Twenty-fourth.

It is a fire that, kindling its first embers in the narrow nook of a private bosom, caught from a wandering spark out of another private heart, glows and enlarges, * * * and so lights up the whole world and all nature with its generous flame.

June Twenty-fifth.



HAT which is so beautiful and attractive as these relations, must be succeeded and supplanted only by what is more beautiful, and so on forever.

June Twenty-sixth.

We are often made to feel that our affections are but tents of a night. Though slowly and with pain, the objects of the affections change as the objects of thought do.

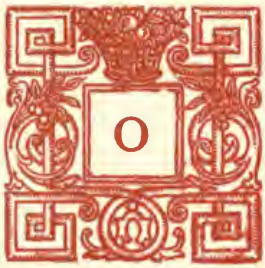
June Twenty-seventh.

There are moments when the affections rule and absorb the man and make his happiness dependent upon a person or persons. But in health the mind is presently seen again.

June Twenty-eighth.

By conversation with that which is in itself excellent, magnanimous, lowly and just, the lover comes to a warmer love of these nobilities, and a quicker apprehension of them.

June Twenty-ninth.



F poetry the success is not attained when it lulls and satisfies, but when it astonishes and fires us with new endeavors after the unattainable.

June Thirtieth.

We need not fear that we can lose anything by the progress of the soul. The soul may be trusted to the end.

CIRCLES

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "CIRCLES"

July First.

THE eye is the first circle; the horizon which it forms is the second; and throughout nature this primary picture is repeated without end.

July Second.

Our life is an apprenticeship to the truth that around every circle another can be drawn.

July Third.

St. Augustine described the nature of God as a circle whose center was everywhere and its circumference nowhere.

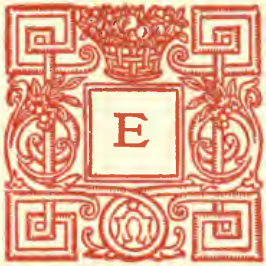
July Fourth.

There are no fixtures in nature. The universe is fluid and volatile. * * * Our Globe seen by God is a transparent law, not a mass of facts. The law dissolves the fact and holds it fluid.

July Fifth.

Men walk as prophecies of the next age.

July Sixth.



VERYTHING looks permanent until its secret is known. A rich estate appears to women and children a firm and lasting fact; to a merchant, one easily created out of any materials, and easily lost.

July Seventh.

The life of man is a self-evolving circle, which, from a ring imperceptibly small, rushes on all sides outwards to new and larger circles and that without end.

July Eighth.

The extent to which this generation of circles, wheel without wheel, will go, depends on the force or truth of the individual soul.

July Ninth.

How often must we learn this lesson? Men cease to interest us when we find their limitations.

July Tenth.

Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet.

July Eleventh.

HERE is not a piece of science but its flank may be turned to-morrow; there is not any literary reputation * * * that may not be revised and condemned.

July Twelfth.

Good as is discourse, silence is better, and shames it. The length of the discourse indicates the distance of thought betwixt the speaker and the hearer.

July Thirteenth.

Every man is not so much a workman in the world as he is a suggestion of that he should be.

July Fourteenth.

Valor consists in the power of self-recovery, so that a man cannot have his flank turned, cannot be outgeneralled, but put him where you will, he stands.

July Fifteenth.

Thus there is no sleep, no pause, no preservation, but all things renew, germinate and spring.

July Sixteenth.

HE key to every man is his thoughts. Sturdy and defying though he look, he has a helm which he obeys, which is the idea after which all his facts are classified. He can only be reformed by showing him a new idea which commands his own.

July Seventeenth.

No truth so sublime but it may be trivial to-morrow in the light of new thoughts.

July Eighteenth.

The only sin is limitation. As soon as you once come up with a man's limitations, it is all over with him.

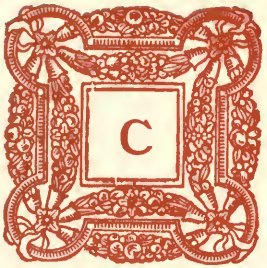
July Nineteenth.

Life is a series of surprises. We do not guess to-day the mood, the pleasure, the power of to-morrow, when we are building up our being.

July Twentieth.

No love can be bound by oath or covenant to secure it against a higher love.

July Twenty-first.



ONVERSATION is a game of circles. In conversation we pluck up the *termini* which bound the common of silence on every side.

July Twenty-second

Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.

July Twenty-third.

In nature every moment is new; the best is always swallowed and forgotten; the coming only is sacred.

July Twenty-fourth.

The sweet of nature is love; yet if I have a friend I am tormented by my imperfections. * * * If he were high enough to slight me, then could I love him, and rise by my affection to new heights.

July Twenty-fifth.

The great man is not convulsible. He is so much that events pass over him without much impression.

July Twenty-sixth.

HE things which are dear to men at this hour are so on account of the ideas which have emerged on their mental horizon, and which cause the present order of things, as a tree bears its apples.

July Twenty-seventh.

The continual effort to raise himself above himself, to work a pitch above his last height, betrays itself in a man's relations. We thirst for approbation, yet cannot forgive the approver.

July Twenty-eighth.

Infinitely alluring and attractive was he to you yesterday, a great hope, a sea to swim in; now, you have found his shores, found it a pond, and you care not if you never see it again.

July Twenty-ninth.

The one thing which we seek with insatiable desire is to forget ourselves, to be surprised out of our propriety, to lose our sempiternal memory and to do something without knowing how or why; in short, to draw a new circle.

July Thirtieth.

VERY personal consideration that we allow costs us heavenly state. We sell the thrones of angels for a short and turbulent pleasure.

July Thirty-first.

One man's justice is another's injustice; one man's beauty another's ugliness; one man's wisdom another's folly; as one beholds the same objects from a higher point of view.

THE OVER-SOUL

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "THE OVER-SOUL"

August First.

THE philosophy of six thousand years has not searched the chambers and magazines of the soul. In its experiments there has always remained, in the last analysis, a residuum it could not resolve.

August Second.

Our faith comes in moments; our vice is habitual. Yet there is a depth in those brief moments which constrains us to ascribe more reality to them than to all other experiences.

August Third.

I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

August Fourth.

Man is a stream whose source is hidden. Always our being is descending into us from we know not whence.

August Fifth.

There is a difference between one and another hour of life in their authority and subsequent effect.

August Sixth.

HEN it (the soul) breathes through his intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through his will, it is virtue; when it flows through his affection, it is love.

August Seventh.

How dear, how soothing to man arises the idea of God, peopling the lonely place, effacing the scars of our mistakes and disappointments!

August Eighth.

Ineffable is the union of man and God in every act of the soul. * * * Ever it inspires awe and astonishment.

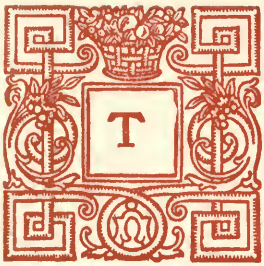
August Ninth.

The soul looketh steadily forwards, creating a world always before her, leaving worlds always behind her.

August Tenth.

O, believe, as thou livest, that every sound that is spoken over the round world, which thou oughtest to hear, will vibrate on thine ear.

August Eleventh.



O the soul in her pure action all the virtues are natural, and not painfully acquired. Speak to his heart, and the man becomes suddenly virtuous.

August Twelfth.

A wise old proverb says, "God comes to see us without bell."

August Thirteenth.

Those who are capable of humility, of justice, of love, of aspiration, are already on a platform that commands the sciences and arts, speech and poetry, action and grace.

August Fourteenth.

Before the great revelations of the soul, Time, Space and Nature shrink away.

August Fifteenth.

She has no dates, nor rites, nor persons, nor specialties, nor men. The soul knows only the soul; all else is idle weeds for her wearing.

August Sixteenth.

HE weakness of the will begins when the individual would be some thing of himself. All reform aims in some one particular to let the great soul have its way through us; in other words, to engage us to obey.

August Seventeenth.

The heart which abandons itself to the Supreme Mind finds itself related to all its works, and will travel a royal road to particular knowledges and powers.

August Eighteenth.

The most exact calculator has no prescience that somewhat incalculable may not baulk the very next moment.

August Nineteenth.

The whole intercourse of society, its trade, its religion, its friendships, its quarrels,—is one wide judicial investigation of character.

August Twentieth.

That which we are, we shall teach, not voluntarily but involuntarily.

August Twenty-first.

EAL so plainly with man and woman as to constrain the utmost sincerity and destroy all hope of trifling with you. It is the highest compliment you can pay.

August Twenty-second.

More and more the surges of everlasting nature enter into me, and I become public and human in my regards and actions.

August Twenty-third.

The things that are really for thee gravitate to thee.

August Twenty-fourth.

Some thoughts always find us young and keep us so. Such a thought is the love of the universal and eternal beauty.

August Twenty-fifth.

He that finds God a sweet enveloping thought to him never counts his company. When I sit in that presence who shall dare to come in?

August Twenty-sixth.

VERY friend whom not thy fantastic will but the great and tender heart in thee craveth, shall lock thee in his embrace. And this, because the heart in thee is the heart of all.

August Twenty-seventh.

It is not in an arbitrary "decree of God," but in the nature of man, that a veil shuts down on the facts of to-morrow; * * * by this veil which curtains events it instructs the children of men to live in to-day.

August Twenty-eighth.

The soul that ascendeth to worship the great God, is plain and true; * * * does not want admiration; dwells in the hour that now is, in the earnest experience of the common day.

August Twenty-ninth.

The least activity of the intellectual powers redeems us in a degree from the influence of time. In sickness, in languor, give us a strain of poetry or a profound sentence, and we are refreshed.

August Thirtieth.

HE action of the soul is oftener in that which is felt and left unsaid than in that which is said in any conversation.

August Thirty-first.

We owe many valuable observations to people who are not very acute or profound, and who say the thing without effort which we want and have long been hunting in vain.

CHARACTER

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "CHARACTER"

September First.

E cannot find the smallest part of the personal weight of Washington, in the narrative of his exploits. * * * but somewhat resided in these men which begot an expectation that outran all their performance.

September Second.

This is that which we call Character,—a reserved force which acts directly by presence, and without means.

September Third.

The purest literary talent appears at one time great, at another time small, but character is of a stellar and undiminishable greatness.

September Fourth.

No change of circumstances can repair a defect of character.

September Fifth.

The reason why this or that man is fortunate, is not to be told. It lies in the man; that is all anybody can tell you about it.

September Sixth.

IGHER natures overpower lower ones by affecting with a certain sleep. The faculties are locked up and offer no resistance. Perhaps that is the universal law.

September Seventh.

A healthy soul stands united with the Just and the True, as the magnet arranges itself with the pole. * * * he is thus the medium of the highest influence to all who are not on the same level.

September Eighth.

Men of character are the conscience of the society to which they belong.

September Ninth.

Truth is the summit of being: justice is the application of it to affairs.

September Tenth.

Our action should rest mathematically on our substance. In nature, there are no false valuations.

September Eleventh.

HE covetousness * * * which saddens me, when I ascribe it to society, is my own. I am always environed by myself. On the other part, rectitude is a perpetual victory, celebrated * * * by serenity, which is joy fixed or habitual.

September Twelfth.

Justice must prevail, and it is the privilege of truth to make itself believed. Character is this moral order seen through the medium of an individual.

September Thirteenth.

How often has the influence of a true master realized all the tales of magic! A river of command seems to run down from his eyes into all those who behold him.

September Fourteenth.

Divine persons are character born, or, to borrow a phrase from Napoleon, they are victory organized.

September Fifteenth.

Those who live to the future must always appear selfish to those who live to the present.

September Sixteenth.

IT is not enough that the intellect should see the evils, and their remedy. We shall still postpone our existence, nor take the ground to which we are entitled, whilst it is only a thought and not a spirit that incites us.

September Seventeenth.

New actions are the only apologies and explanations of old ones, which the noble can bear to offer or receive.

September Eighteenth.

The history of those gods and saints which the world has written, and then worshiped, are documents of character.

September Nineteenth.

When the high cannot bring up the low to itself, it benumbs it, as man charms down the resistance of the lower animals. Men exert on each other a similar occult power.

September Twentieth.

Some natures are too good to be spoiled by praise, and whenever the vein of thought reaches down into the profound, there is no danger from vanity.

September Twenty-first.

HARACTER is nature in the highest form. * * * This masterpiece is best when no hands but nature's have been laid on it.

September Twenty-second.

If your friend has displeased you, you shall not sit down to consider it, for he has already lost all memory of the passage, and has doubled his power to serve you, and, ere you can rise up again, will burden you with blessings.

September Twenty-third.

Men should be intelligent and earnest. They must also make us feel, that they have a controlling happy future, opening before them, which sheds a splendor on the passing hour.

September Twenty-fourth.

Character wants room; must not be crowded on by persons, nor be judged from glimpses got in the press of affairs, or on few occasions. It needs perspective, as a great building.

September Twenty-fifth.

EVERY trait which the artist recorded in stone, he had seen in life, and better than his copy. We have seen many counterfeits, but we are born believers in great men.

September Twenty-sixth.

I know nothing which life has to offer so satisfying as the profound good understanding, which can subsist * * * between two virtuous men, each of whom is sure of himself, and sure of his friend.

September Twenty-seventh.

When men shall meet as they ought, each a benefactor, * * * clothed with thoughts, with deeds, with accomplishments, it should be the festival of nature which all things announce.

September Twenty-eighth.

We have no pleasure in thinking of a benevolence that is only measured by its works. Love is inexhaustible, and if its estate is wasted, its granary emptied, still cheers and enriches.

September Twenty-ninth.

RIENDS also follow the laws of divine necessity; they gravitate to each other, and cannot otherwise:—

"When each the other shall avoid
Shall each by each be most enjoyed."

September Thirtieth.

We shall one day see that the most private is the most public energy, that quality atones for quantity, and grandeur of character acts in the dark, and succors them who never saw it.

N A T U R E

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "NATURE"

October First.

HE rounded world is fair to see,
Nine times folded in mystery:
Though baffled seers cannot impart
The secret of its laboring heart,
Throb thine with Nature's throbbing Breast,
And all is clear from East to West."

October Second.

A man can only speak, so long as he does not feel his speech to be partial and inadequate.

October Third.

It seems as if the day was not wholly profane, in which we have given heed to some natural object.

October Fourth.

Nature cannot be surprised in undress. Beauty breaks in everywhere.

October Fifth.

The difference between landscape and landscape is small, but there is great difference in the beholders.

October Sixth.

ERE (at the gates of the forest) we find nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges like a god all men that come to her.

October Seventh.

The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours, seems longevity enough.

October Eighth.

No man is quite sane; each has a vein of folly in his composition.

October Ninth.

We aim above the mark, to hit the mark. Every act hath some falsehood of exaggeration in it.

October Tenth.

The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. * * * The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles.

October Eleventh.

HE who knows the most, he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the water, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man.

October Twelfth.

Only as far as the Masters of the world have called in nature to their aid, can they reach the height of magnificence.

October Thirteenth.

Nature is always consistent though she feigns to contravene her own laws. She keeps her laws and seems to transcend them.

October Fourteenth.

Every moment instructs, and every object: for wisdom is infused into every form. * * * we did not guess its essence until after a long time.

October Fifteenth.

The hunger for wealth, which reduces the planet to a garden, fools the eager pursuer.

October Sixteenth.

THE stars at night stoop down over the brownest, homeliest common, with all the spiritual magnificence which they shed on the Campagna, or on the marble deserts of Egypt.

October Seventeenth.

The reflections of trees and flowers in glassy lakes, the musical * * * south wind, * * *—these are the music and pictures of the most ancient religion.

October Eighteenth.

We exaggerate the praises of local scenery. In every landscape the point of astonishment is the meeting of the sky and the earth, and that is seen from the first hillock as well as from the Alleghanies.

October Nineteenth.

There are days which occur in this climate, at almost any season of the year, wherein the world reaches its perfection, when the air, the heavenly bodies, and the earth, make a harmony, as if nature would indulge her offspring.

October Twentieth.

HE discovery that wisdom has other tongues and ministers than we, that though we should hold our peace, the truth would not the less be spoken, might check injuriously the flames of our zeal.

October Twenty-first.

The beauty of nature must always seem unreal and mocking, until the landscape has human figures, that are as good as itself.

October Twenty-second.

Nature is loved by what is best in us. It is loved as the City of God, although, or rather because there is no citizen. The sunset is unlike anything that is underneath it: it wants men.

October Twenty-third.

It is an odd jealousy: but the poet finds himself not near enough to his object. * * * What splendid distance, what recesses of ineffable pomp and loveliness in the sunset! But who can go where they are or lay his hand or plant his foot thereon?

October Twenty-fourth.

ATURE is the incarnation of a thought, and turns to a thought again, as ice becomes water and gas.

October Twenty-fifth.

"Spirit that lurks each form within
Beckons to spirit of its kin;
Self-kindled every atom glows,
And hints the future which it owes."

October Twenty-sixth.

No man can write anything, who does not think that what he writes is for the time the history of the world; or do anything well who does not esteem his work to be of importance.

October Twenty-seventh.

After every foolish day we sleep off the fumes and furies of its hours; and though we are always engaged with particulars, and often enslaved to them, we bring with us to every experiment the innate universal laws.

October Twenty-eighth.

HE moral sensibility which makes Edens and Tempes so easily, may not be always found, but the material landscape is never far off. We can find these enchantments without visiting Como Lake or the Madeira Islands.

October Twenty-ninth.

We live in a system of approximations. Every end is prospective of some other end, which is also temporary, a round and final success no where.

October Thirtieth.

We are escorted on every hand through life by spiritual agents, and a beneficent purpose lies in wait for us.

October Thirty-first.

To the intelligent, nature converts itself into a vast promise, and will not be rashly explained. Her secret is untold.

NOMINALIST AND REALIST

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "NOMINALIST AND REALIST"

November First.

E have such exorbitant eyes that on seeing the smallest arc we complete the curve, and when the curtain is lifted * * * we are vexed to find that no more was drawn, than just that fragment of arc which we first beheld.

November Second.

Great men or men of great gifts you shall easily find, but symmetrical men never.

November Third.

All persons exist to society by some shining trait of beauty or utility, which they have.

November Fourth.

A personal influence is an IGNIS FATUUS. * * * the Will-o'-the-wisp vanishes if you go too near, vanishes if you go too far, and only blazes at one angle.

November Fifth.

Beautiful details we must have, or no artist: but they must be means and never other. The eye must not lose sight for a moment of the purpose.

NOMINALIST AND REALIST.

November Sixth.

IT is bad enough, that our geniuses cannot do anything useful, but it is worse that no man is fit for society who has fine traits. He is admired at a distance, but he cannot come near without appearing a cripple.

November Seventh.

All our poets, heroes, and saints fail utterly in some one or in many parts to satisfy our idea, fail to draw out spontaneous interest, and so leave us without any hope of realization but in our own future.

November Eighth.

Our proclivity to details cannot quite degrade our life, and divest it of poetry.

November Ninth.

There is nothing we cherish and strive to draw to us, but in some hour we turn and rend it.

November Tenth.

Proportion is almost impossible to human beings. There is no one who does not exaggerate.

November Eleventh.

HENCE the immense benefit of party in politics, as it reveals faults of character in a chief, which the intellectual force of the person, with ordinary opportunity and not hurled into aphelion by hatred, could not have been seen.

November Twelfth.

Lively boys write to their ear and eye, and the cool reader finds nothing but sweet jingles in it. When they grow older they respect the argument.

November Thirteenth.

Wherever you go a wit like your own has been before you, and has realized its thought.

November Fourteenth.

Nature keeps herself whole, and her representation complete in the experience of each mind. She suffers no seat to be vacant in her college.

November Fifteenth.

All things show us, that on every side we are very near to the best.

November Sixteenth.

FOR, rightly, every man is a channel through which heaven floweth, and, whilst I fancied I was criticising him, I was censuring or rather terminating my own soul.

November Seventeenth.

The rotation which whirls every leaf and pebble to the meridian, reaches to every gift of man, and we all take turns at the top.

November Eighteenth.

As long as any man exists there is some need of him; let him fight for his own.

November Nineteenth.

Our affections and our experience urge that every individual is entitled to honor, and a very generous treatment is sure to be repaid.

November Twentieth.

What is best in each kind is an index of what should be the average of that thing.

November Twenty-first.

IT is commonly said by farmers, that a good pear or apple costs no more time or pains to rear than a poor one; so I would have no work of art, no speech, or action, or thought, or friend, but the best.

November Twenty-second.

The men of fine parts protect themselves by solitude or by courtesy; or by satire or by an acid worldly manner, each concealing as he best can, his incapacity for useful association, but they want either love or self-reliance.

November Twenty-third.

How sincere and confidential we can be, saying all that lies in the mind, and yet go away feeling that all is yet unsaid, from the incapacity of the parties to know each other, although they use the same words!

November Twenty-fourth.

If you criticise a fine genius the odds are that you are out of your reckoning, and, instead of the poet, are censuring your own caricature of him.

November Twenty-fifth.

IF we were not of all opinions! if we did not in any moment shift the platform on which we stand, and look and speak from another!

November Twenty-sixth.

Each man's genius being nearly and affectionately explored, he is justified in his individuality, as his nature is found to be immense.

November Twenty-seventh.

It is the secret of the world that all things subsist, and do not die, but only retire a little from sight, and afterwards return again.

November Twenty-eighth.

The reason of idleness and of crime is the deferring of our hopes. Whilst we are waiting we beguile the time with jokes, with sleep, with eating and with crimes.

November Twenty-ninth.

E fancy men are individuals; so are pumpkins; but every pumpkin in the field goes through every point of pumpkin history.

November Thirtieth.

It is all idle talking; as much as a man is a whole, so is he also a part; and it were partial not to see it.

INTELLECT

SELECTED GEMS FROM RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSAY "INTELLECT"

December First.

ATER dissolves wood and iron and salt; air dissolves water; electric fire dissolves air, but the intellect dissolves fire, gravity, laws, method and the subtlest unnamed relations on nature in its resistless menstruum.

December Second.

Intellect lies behind genius, which is intellect constructive.

December Third.

Gladly would I unfold in calm degrees a natural history of the intellect, but what man has yet been able to mark the steps and boundaries of that transparent essence?

December Fourth.

Intellect is void of affection, and sees an object as it stands in the light of science, cool and disengaged.

December Fifth.

A truth, separated by the intellect, is no longer a subject of destiny. We behold it as a god upraised above care and fear.

December Sixth.

VERY man beholds his human condition with a degree of melancholy. As a ship aground is battered by the waves, so man, imprisoned in mortal life, lies open to the mercy of coming events.

December Seventh.

Nature shows all things formed and bound. The intellect pierces the form, overleaps the wall, detects intrinsic likeness between remote things and reduces all things into a few principles.

December Eighth.

The making a fact the subject of thought raises it.

December Ninth.

What is addressed to us for contemplation does not threaten us but makes us intellectual beings.

December Tenth.

All our progress is an unfolding like the vegetable bud. You have first an instinct, then an opinion, then a knowledge, as the plant has root, bud and fruit.

December Eleventh.

ONG prior to the age of reflection is the thinking of the mind. Out of darkness it came insensibly into the marvelous light of to-day.

December Twelfth.

And so any fact in our life, * * * disentangled from the web of our unconsciousness, becomes an object impersonal and immortal. It is the past restored, but embalmed.

December Thirteenth.

We have little control over our thoughts.

December Fourteenth.

In the fog of good and evil affections it is hard for man to walk forward in a straight line.

December Fifteenth.

The walls of rude minds are scrawled all over with facts, with thoughts. They shall one day bring a lantern and read the inscriptions.

December Sixteenth.

E are the prisoners of ideas. They catch us up for moments into their heaven and so fully engage us that we take no thought for the morrow.

December Seventeenth.

In the most worn, pedantic, introverted self-tormentor's life, the greatest part is incalculable by him, unforeseen, unimaginable, and must be, until he can take himself up by his own ears.

December Eighteenth.

God enters by a private door into every individual.

December Nineteenth.

If we consider what persons have stimulated and profited us, we shall perceive the superiority of the spontaneous or intuitive principle over the arithmetical or logical.

December Twentieth.

What is the hardest task in the world? To think.

December Twenty-first.

TRUST the instinct to the end, though you can render no reason. It is vain to hurry it. By trusting it to the end, it shall ripen into truth and you shall know why you believe.

December Twenty-second.

Each mind has its own method. A true man never acquires after college rules. What you have aggregated in a natural manner surprises and delights when it is produced.

December Twenty-third.

The considerations of time and place, of you and me, of profit and hurt, tyrannize over most men's minds. Intellect separates the fact considered, from you, from all local and personal reference, and discerns it as if it existed for its own sake.

December Twenty-fourth.

The constructive intellect produces thoughts, sentences, poems, plans, designs, systems. It is the generation of the mind, the marriage of thought with nature.

December Twenty-fifth.

JESUS says, Leave father, mother, house and lands, and follow Me. Who leaves all, receives more. This is as true intellectually as morally.

December Twenty-sixth.

Our spontaneous action is always the best. You cannot with your best deliberation and heed come so close to any question as your spontaneous glance will bring you whilst you rise from your bed, * * * after meditating the matter before sleep on the previous night.

December Twenty-seventh.

Not by any conscious imitation of particular forms are the grand strokes of the painter executed, but by repairing to the fountain-head of all forms in his mind.

December Twenty-eighth.

If the constructive powers are rare and it is given to few men to be poets, yet every man is a receiver of this descending holy ghost, and may well study the laws of its influx.

December Twenty-ninth.

GOD offers to every mind its choice between truth and repose. Take which you please, —you can never have both.

December Thirtieth.

He in whom the love of repose predominates will accept the first creed, the first philosophy. * * * He gets rest, commodity and reputation; but he shuts the door of truth.

December Thirty-first.

The ancient sentence said, Let us be silent, for so are the gods. Silence is a solvent that destroys personality, and gives us leave to be great and universal.

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